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### WINGED WAR-MESSENGERS.

WITH the exception of the frigid zones, birds of the dove kind, or, as ornithologists prefer to call them, members of the family *Columbidae*, are indigenous to every quarter of the globe; and they would appear to have been domesticated at an early date, with the result that their marvellous power of finding their homes from almost incredible distances was soon noticed by the ancients, who saw in them a means of quickly communicating between one district and another, an idea which was speedily put into practice. In all birds the muscles are extremely vigorous; and from the rapidity of the circulation, the high oxygenation of the blood, and the extent to which the lungs are developed, they are capable of sustaining long-continued exertion; and this coupled with the length of wing possessed by pigeons, renders the latter peculiarly adapted for swiftly accomplishing long-distance flights. As instances of their velocity, it may be mentioned that on the 22d of November 1819, thirty-two pigeons, which 'homed' at Antwerp, were liberated from London at seven o'clock in the morning; and the first of these performed the journey—a distance of about two hundred and ten miles—by noon; or, allowing for difference of time, in four hours forty-five minutes—the second bird being a quarter of an hour later; thus giving the speed of travelling at about forty-four and a half miles per hour. In July 1872, a pigeon race from Spalding to London took place, when the distance was covered at the rate of a mile in ninety seconds.

Though pigeons were used as carriers by the ancients, and were by far the swiftest messengers they possessed, advantage does not appear, except in comparatively rare instances, to have been taken of their services for communicating between one district and another during time of war, though that is a period when the speedy transmission of correspondence between one commander and another is of the utmost importance, and when the delay of a message, even for a brief

space, may be the cause of disaster to an entire army. The pigeon was Julius Caesar's field telegraph; and it was by means of this bird that Hirtius and Brutus corresponded with each other at the siege of Mutina or Modena, 43 B.C. In this capacity, however, it has been but seldom employed, though for what reason it is somewhat difficult to conceive; and consequently, the mounted messenger, the swift-footed courier, and the heliograph and other methods of signalling, were, prior to the invention of railways, balloons, and the telegraph, the only agents made use of for purposes of communication during military operations. Among modern nations, the second of these has been dispensed with, and trust is now chiefly placed in mounted messengers, the railway, and the telegraph as the means of conveying despatches from one point to another during time of war. But these are all liable to break down or to fall into the enemy's hands, and added to which drawback, there is the fact, that during a siege it is impossible to construct a telegraph; and in combined operations between a moving fleet and a coast fortress all three agents become useless. In such cases the heliograph and other modes of signalling are generally resorted to, and in several instances they have been found to be of immense service. But there are certain conditions which sometimes render the establishing of signal-stations a matter of great difficulty, if not impossibility, as, for instance, the presence of the enemy, topographical peculiarities of the country, and atmospheric causes; besides which, there is always the risk that in a war between civilised nations, the communication may be interpreted by the enemy, and so the purpose it was intended to serve be frustrated. The alternative to signalling is the balloon; but though this has in some instances afforded a valuable means of communication, and notably during the late Franco-German war, when it was more extensively used than ever before, its success depends upon such a variety of conditions, atmospheric and other, that its application is confined to very narrow limits.

Notwithstanding the drawbacks named, however, it was not until the siege of Paris in 1870-71 that another method of communicating between an enemy-encircled town and the outer world was practised ; for, though pigeon-flying had for long been indulged in as a pastime by certain classes among most nations, no one appears to have conceived the idea of utilising these birds as a means of carrying on correspondence in time of war until the sanguinary struggle which took place sixteen years ago between two of the foremost nations in Europe ; and even then it was not until every other method of communication had been cut off save that of balloons, that pigeons were employed as messengers. Balloons could leave Paris daily, if necessary, to carry despatches beyond the Prussian lines, but they could not effect a return ; so that, had it not been for pigeons, the inhabitants of the French capital would during the whole of that memorable siege have been utterly ignorant of events transpiring outside their own limited circle. To effect communication, the birds were conveyed from the city in balloons and were forwarded to Tours, at the prefecture of which a large room was converted into a pigeon-loft. The birds selected for the return journey were taken by train from Tours in the early morning to the farthest point north that could be safely reached, and, with missives attached, were then liberated. From November 18, 1870, until January 28, 1871, a pigeon post existed between London and Tours ; and during that period, forty-eight day mails and eleven hundred and eighty-six night mails were thus sent. Communications arriving from the first-named city, and the destination of which it was intended should be Paris, were despatched from Tours by winged messengers in the manner described ; and thus between the dates named was communication effected between the English and French capitals.

The method of attaching the messages to the birds, a matter which is of great importance, had not been studied before the siege, and consequently at first several pigeons reached their destination without the expected missive attached. As, at the beginning of this system of communication, the paper message was simply rolled up tight, waxed over, and attached to a feather of the bird's tail, its loss was due to various causes—to being pecked by the bearer, to being cut by the thin twine which kept it in its place, and to becoming saturated with wet in consequence of insufficient waxing. To obviate these difficulties, the despatch was subsequently inserted in a small goose-quill, about two inches long, which was then pierced close to its ends with a red-hot bodkin, so as not to split it, and in the holes thus made, waxed silken threads were inserted, to fix it to the strongest feather of the tail.

By the aid of micro-photography, the original messages were copied, greatly reduced in size, upon thin films of collodion, each of which con-

tained on an average two thousand five hundred communications ; and as one bird could easily carry a dozen of these films, it was therefore possible to forward thirty thousand communications by one pigeon. Sometimes this number was exceeded, as, for instance, when on one occasion a single bird bore eighteen of these minute pellicles, equal to forty thousand messages. In order to insure arrival, each missive was copied many times, and was sent by several pigeons, some of the despatches being forwarded as many as thirty-nine times, and others as few as three, the average being about twenty. By adopting this plan, though all the birds which were 'tossed' did not reach the capital, a copy of every message sent was received. In this manner one hundred and fifty thousand official and one million private communications were carried into Paris during the four months that the city was in a state of siege. Upon each pigeon-loft from which birds had been furnished for government use, the administration of posts placed a sentry, and when one of the winged messengers arrived, the owner was conducted under escort with his bird to M. Chassinat, Postmaster-general, who detached the missives, which were in due course delivered at their various destinations.

The immense services thus rendered by pigeons to a beleaguered city during the greatest and most memorable siege of modern times did not escape the notice of military authorities of other nations, and soon after the war, almost every continental country commenced the organisation of regular 'Military Pigeon Systems,' all of which are based upon the same guiding considerations. The fortresses on the frontiers of the various countries, and especially those which during the time of war would be most liable to attack by an enemy, together with a large number of both open and fortified inland towns, are provided with pigeon-lofts. Between the fortresses there is often direct communication ; but some important point in the interior of the country—generally the capital—is selected as a central station with which all others are to communicate. In instances where the distance separating outlying stations from the central one is considered too great for the pigeons to accomplish with any degree of certainty, connection is insured by means of intermediate ones.

The number of birds at each station varies according to its position, the distances that have to be flown, and the number of directions in which the pigeons have to be trained. At a station where they are only intended to be used in one direction, about two hundred birds are kept ; and at those stations which communicate in more than one quarter, something like one hundred and fifty pigeons are maintained for each section or direction after the first. For instance, at a station where birds are trained to fly in three directions, there are five hundred pigeons, which, in case of siege, will be sufficient to insure communication with the outer world for six months, the calculation being arrived at in the following manner. Suppose that correspondence is on an average to take place twice a week, then in six months fifty-two liberations of birds would be necessary, and as the number despatched on each occasion may be taken to average three, the total number of pigeons used

would be one hundred and fifty-six for each direction.

In Germany, which was one of the first nations to establish these military pigeon-lofts, the commandant of the place is held responsible for the birds being properly cared for and trained. A non-commissioned officer is in charge, and under him are two private soldiers and a keeper, the latter of whom receives a salary of four pounds ten shillings per month. A list of the birds is kept in a register, which records their sex, colour, age, distinguishing marks, and other particulars; and another register gives the different places from which the pigeons have accomplished journeys, together with notes on the rapidity and reliability of their flight, and complete information on the capabilities of every bird. So cognisant are the Germans of the important services that can be rendered by pigeons in time of war, that they have gradually established pigeon-station after pigeon-station, until the military pigeon system possessed by them has become by far the most complete and extensive of any in existence. The fortresses of Königsberg, Thorn, and Posen, near the eastern frontier, are all in communication with the capital; and the whole of the northern coast is studded with pigeon-stations, which are under the supervision of the Minister of Marine, and the principal of which are at Danzig, Stettin, Kiel, Tönning, and Wilhelmshafen; whilst the western fortresses of Metz, Strassburg, and Cologne each contain about four hundred trained pigeons, a number which it is proposed to increase to six hundred. A good stock of birds is also kept at Würzburg and Mayence. Cologne, which is in direct communication with Berlin—a fly of three hundred miles—is a transmitting station for Metz, and probably also for Mayence; whilst Strassburg and Metz can both correspond with the capital through Würzburg. It will thus be seen that by means of this network of pigeon-stations all parts of Germany could, in the event of an enemy seizing her telegraphs and railways, still communicate with the capital, and the chief towns on the frontiers could still correspond with each other.

In France, a like system of pigeon-stations has been established, and the military budget annually assigns a credit of one hundred thousand francs (four thousand pounds) for the cost of signalling and maintaining the pigeon-lofts.

But although this system of communication has found such great favour on the continent, our own military authorities have not hitherto entertained the idea, doubtless regarding our sea-girt position as being a sufficient protection against an invasion, and there being no necessity, therefore, to give attention to means of communication beyond those we already possess. Such reasoning may to a great extent be correct; but as regards some of our foreign possessions, it certainly does seem as though the establishing of pigeon-stations on the frontiers and coasts would be most useful adjuncts to the means at present available for purposes of correspondence, in case war should at any time unfortunately break out in these regions. It cannot be that the cost of maintaining military pigeon-stations has been the reason why we have not followed the example set by other great continental nations, for that would

be only a mere fraction in a country's annual expenditure; the probable reason is, that the authorities have not hitherto given the subject that amount of attention which it deserves. But that they are at length beginning to see the importance of such a system being established may be inferred from the fact, that in the latter portion of January 1886, Captain H. P. Allatt, of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, read a paper in London, before a number of military and naval men, in which he advocated the carrying out of a system of pigeon-stations like that which prevails in most great European countries; and the opinion of the majority of those present was in favour of the formation of some government department whose function it should be to train pigeons in the service of England and her possessions. It was also thought that it would be quite possible to train these birds to maintain communication between ship and shore, so that, in case of a combined attack by land and sea forces, those in command could correspond with each other.

Whether or not Captain Allatt's paper is likely to bring about the object sought by its author, it is entirely outside the province of this article to predict; but it is a notable fact that at last year's Easter Volunteer manoeuvres at Portsmouth and Dover, pigeons were employed as messengers, and that within the cognisance of the commander-in-chief (the Duke of Cambridge). The idea upon which the operations at both the places named were based was, that invading forces had landed on the southern coast of England, and, being in possession of the country in the vicinity of Portsmouth and Dover, had proceeded to invest these towns; that the telegraph had fallen into the enemy's hands, and that the garrisons were therefore unable to communicate by ordinary means with any other part of the country. A number of pigeons which had been trained by Captain Allatt for the purpose were consequently employed to maintain communication with the supposed besieged seaports. Upon the receipt of the news that the 'invaders' had landed at Whitstable Bay, pigeons were despatched from Dover to Portsmouth, to London, and to Canterbury; and upon the enemy reaching and occupying the latter place in force, a winged messenger was sent to Dover, which was reached in an hour, bearing a communication to the Deputy-assistant Adjutant-general. An hour later, another missive was received, stating that the enemy was advancing on Lydden with a strong force; and the whole of the distant communications it was necessary to make during the 'Battle of Lydden' were conveyed by pigeons. The troops at Dover were thus notified of the approach of the 'invaders,' notwithstanding that telegraphic communication had been cut off, and were able to prepare for the expected attack.

It has been said that it will be a bad day for Old England when she is driven to rely on pigeons to bring her news in time of war; but probably the success which attended the experiments alluded to may have some weight with our military authorities in considering the advisability of establishing pigeon-stations in Great Britain or her dependencies; for it is beyond doubt that should the day unfortunately come when our present modes of communication, either

in this country or in our possessions across the seas, fall into the hands of an enemy, much valuable service might be rendered by an organised military pigeon system.

RICHARD CABLE,  
THE LIGHTSHIPMAN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'MEHALAH,' 'JOHN HERRING,'  
'COURT ROYAL,' ETC.

CHAPTER XXIII.—HOME?

'WE dine at half-past seven. The rector and Mrs Sellwood are coming. They have that French Countess staying with them.'

'Very well, papa.—Are those dreadful men gone?'

'Hark! They are giving you three cheers. They will have to carry Jonas Flinders away in a wheelbarrow. He was tipsy when he came. He's a relation of Richard's, is he not?'

'No, papa,' said Josephine, colouring. 'Richard has no relations here.'

'I am glad of that. I made a mistake. He is a kinsman of the first Mrs Cable—brother, if I am not misinformed, of the deceased Polly. I am glad the tie is no more than that. It would have been awkward to have a drunken brother-in-law, or something of that sort, demanding his entrée. Even as it is, I foresee some awkwardness—he will come to visit Richard, if he does not force his presence on you. It will be as well to let him understand always to go round to the back when he calls.'

An hour passed before Richard Cable came to the Hall. He hesitated about entering by the front and without ringing. He suddenly felt that he was in an awkward position. His wife was Squireess of Hanford, lady of the manor; the mansion belonged to her, and he—he would not be master in the house, and in that great house would probably feel uncomfortable. Home to him was a cottage with a big back garden, and a vine running over the low roof, a kitchen in which the meals were not only cooked but also consumed, and a little bedroom with the stairs opening into it; and a lean-to roof where all the rafters showed. He stood in the porch, put his hand before his mouth, and coughed. The glass window was open, and he looked into the hall; it had a polished oak floor inlaid in patterns. There was a billiard table in it. There were carved cabinets, with yellow and blue Japanese vases on them, and crimson cloth curtains before the staircase which opened out of the hall. Mr Cable ventured a little way within and coughed again. Then, frightened at his own voice, he retreated into the porch, and examined the white jessamine that trailed up it. If he were to go in—he would not know his way about the house. It seemed too absurd to ring the bell, and hardly proper for him to go round to the kitchen.

Richard Cable was a shy man when out of his proper element and among those he did not know intimately. Brave at sea and in any peril, he was timid on land when placed in situations with which he was unacquainted. He was a humble man, with much self-diffidence, and only strong when he thought he was doing his duty.

As he stood in the door, duty was neither before him nor behind him, on this side, nor on that; and he was perplexed. He put his nose to the jessamine, and thrust his hands into his pockets. He knitted his brows and considered. Now he wished he had come along with Josephine directly after landing; then he could have entered the house at her side and taken his proper place; but the strong hunger in his heart to see and clasp the dear golden heads had carried him away, and he had missed his proper opportunity.

Something must be done, he said, and drew his nose away from the jessamine. He pulled his right hand out of his pocket, took off his glazed hat, and walked boldly into the hall, where he began to hum a tune, as he hung up his hat on the peg near the door. He snuffed up a pleasant odour. It is a remarkable phenomenon that the smell of dinner invariably goes where it is not wanted, and where it ought not to be. It is not smelt in the kitchen, where it is cooked; but it travels into the bedrooms; it pervades the staircases; it penetrates to the drawing-room; and it meets those who are about to partake of the dinner, at the entrance of the house. Architects rack their brains, engineers scheme, to circumvent the smell of dinner—all in vain. It will not be circumvented. It has been known to come out of the house by the kitchen chimney, scramble down the roof, and take up a position, from which nothing can drive it away, a quarter of a mile off at the lodge-gates. Now, if it were only the vanilla flavouring of the blanc-mange, or the cinnamon for the stewed pears, or the ratafia for the trifle, that thus announced itself, no one would object; but these delicate essences are elbowed away and down-trodden by the coarser savours of boiled cabbage and cauliflower. Woe betide the householder if he keeps pigs, and his factotum induces him to boil potatoes for the sty. The smell of those potatoes becomes a thick reek in every portion of his house; and by that perversity which orders the events of life, the pig potatoes are certain to be boiling when distinguished, even titled, visitors call on us, and sends them away after a curtailed call, impressed with the belief that our sewers are out of order.

Richard Cable was hungry; and the smell that saluted his nose was grateful. He thought at once, with a softening of the heart, that Josephine had considered him, and was doing a chop or a rasher for him. His mother had desired to detain him, and had promised him supper; but he would not stay with her, because he thought his duty called him to the side of Josephine. As he was venturing hesitatingly across the hall, he heard a door slam, heard a step, and at once retreated to the porch, but not before the butler had caught sight of him, and came after him, with a: 'Now, then! What are you doing here? Trying to carry off a greatcoat, eh? One of them drunken rascals as have been in the kitchen, I'll be bound.'

'I beg your pardon,' said Richard, standing still, and becoming red as fire; 'I'm—I'm the husband of Miss Josephine, sir. That is—sir, I'm Mr Richard Cable.'

'I'm very sorry, sir, very sorry,' said the butler, his face altering immediately. 'I did not see

at first; I thought it was an intruder, and I wasn't sure what he might be up to.—O sir, here come the rector and the ladies.'

The door was darkened by the arrival of the guests.

'There's dinner, sir, immediate, if you'd run up-stairs and dress. I'll tell cook to put back for ten minutes.'

'Dress!' exclaimed Richard, startled, and casting a hasty glance about himself to see if by accident any portion of his garments had not been put on.

'Up-stairs, right-hand side of passage, first door, is your dressing-room, sir,' said the butler, covering him from the visitors.

'But I don't want a dressing-room, sir!' remonstrated Richard. 'I'm in my togs.'

'What! Cable!' called the rector, coming forward. 'Did not expect you here. Did not know that you had returned; wish you joy and happiness. But—I see, just off the water, and I am detaining you from dressing.'

Richard ascended the stairs in a puzzled state of mind, and walked on the side, not in the middle, lest he should dirty the pretty red carpet that ran down the stairs. When he came to the top, he looked about him. 'First door on right hand,' he said, and went to one, but was doubtful whether it were the right door, for the butler had said something about a passage. He saw no passage. He stood hesitatingly at the door and coughed. Then he put his hand on the handle, but doubted whether he ought to open, fearing this might be the wrong room, so he coughed again and tapped faintly at the door. Instantly it flew open, and Josephine appeared in white satin with lace and orange flowers, and a few pearl-gray silk bows, as a compliment to the memory of Cousin Gabriel, as an acknowledgment that she was in mourning. She looked very lovely in her evening dress; it was her bridal dress made into one for the evening.

'Good gracious, Richard! you're not dressed!' she exclaimed, and stepped back.

'Not dressed!' he said with a stupid stare. 'You're the third person who has said this, and yet—I—I can't believe it. I know I am in my togs.'

'O Richard! how late you are. Be quick—you will keep every one waiting. *Do dress!*'

'Dress!' he exclaimed, becoming desperate. 'What more will you have? Shall I put on my greatcoat?'

'Good gracious!' said Josephine, putting her hand to her chin, 'I don't believe you have got any clothes!'

'Feel me,' said Richard, 'if you cannot believe your eyes. I've got my suit on.'

'But not your dress suit. Goodness! what is to be done! I never thought about a set of evening clothes for you. I really supposed you might have provided all that for yourself.'

'I've got the frockcoat in which I was married,' said Cable, 'and the lavender thing-um-jigs, and a yellow nankeen waistcoat. What more do you want?'

'Get into that,' said Josephine hastily; 'there is no help for it. I really must go down. The rector and Mrs Sellwood have come.'

About ten minutes later, Richard Cable was heard coughing outside the drawing-room door.

He was shy of entering, and stuck there hesitating, hearing the voices within, till the butler came to his aid and precipitated him into the room. Then he stood bewildered, looking vacantly about him, till the rector came to his aid and conveyed him into the middle of the apartment.

Josephine looked keenly at him, and almost wished he had come in his dark-blue sailor suit, which became him, instead of cutting the preposterous figure he did. In his nautical dress, he looked so handsome, such a frank, manly fellow, so every inch one of nature's gentlemen; but now—in the black frockcoat and lavender trousers, uncomfortable, shy, ungainly—and—O horror of horrors! without having changed his shirt, with the old coarse linen collars and front, clean but crumpled—and—and—Josephine was in the midst of a conversation in French with the Countess de Marluche, whom the Sellwoods had brought with them, when she lost the thread, forgot what she was saying, forgot the subject about which she was conversing, in her consternation at the figure her husband cut among well-dressed ladies and gentlemen.

'Dinner is served,' said the butler.

She recovered herself at once, and said to the countess: 'We are just off the water. Our yacht only arrived a few hours ago, and we have to ask your indulgence if we appear in picnic guise.'

Then she saw Aunt Judith looking at her, and the rector came over towards her. She was startled. She had forgotten that she, not her aunt, was the lady of the house. Her father turned to Richard Cable, and said: 'It is your place, Mr Cable, to take in the Countess—will you lead the way?'

Josephine cast an appealing look at her father; but he took no notice of it.

Richard was obliged to give his arm to the French lady and lead the way. He was followed by Mr Cornelius with Mrs Sellwood; then came Captain Sellwood and Aunt Judith; lastly, the rector and the bride.

Captain Sellwood maintained an imperturbable face. He would not have come, had he known that Josephine had returned. Mr Cornelius had begged him to make one of the quiet dinner that evening, quite a family party, no strangers. In the little society of Hanford, scarce a week passed without a small dinner of this sort, cosy little repasts, where old friends met again and again at each other's houses. As the Cornelius family were in mourning, recent mourning, of course they gave no parties; but these small unceremonious dinners did not count.

When Richard, with the French lady on his arm, arrived in the hall, he stood still, put his hand to his mouth and coughed. 'I declare,' he said, 'I don't know the bearings.'

'This way, sir,' explained the obsequious butler, bowing at the dining-room door. Then: 'Excuse me, sir; you're at the wrong end of the table—up the room, sir.'

'We shall get right at last, ma'am,' said Richard to his companion. 'I hope you're as ready as I am to play a good knife and fork.'

'Mais! malheureusement! monsieur, je ne parle que fort peu l'Anglais.'

A roast goose was in front of Richard. He

stood up to carve it, and turned back his cuffs. 'I daresay the old lady is hungry,' he said to himself in his kindly thoughts. 'I'm sure in her foreign country she don't get such solid food as in England. We didn't, I know ;' so he helped her to the leg of the goose.

'Mais, monsieur, je vous prie !—c'est un peu trop !'

'Too much ?' So he sliced the leg in half, and served her the drumstick.

'There's stuffing, sir,' said the butler confidentially in his ear.

'Is there, sir ?' answered Richard. 'And how am I to get at it ? It is not often we've had a chance of carving a goose, I can tell you.'

Josephine looked on in terror, lest he should splash the gravy about the table, possibly over the Countess ; but Richard had a hand at once too firm and gentle for that. Though he had no great experience in carving, he managed fairly well, only that he gave enormous helpings to every one, generous helpings, because he wished all to have enough, and he measured all appetites by his own.

He made a few attempts at conversation with the countess, but could not succeed ; her knowledge of English was rudimentary, his knowledge of French was *nil*.

Josephine was fortunately saved the effort of making conversation at her end of the table, because she sat by the rector, who could and did talk whenever he had a chance. She was at leisure, whilst half listening to his voice, to watch her husband's face. It wore its usual kind and honest expression, but it was troubled. He was uncomfortable, willing to do his best, desirous to do his duty, but ignorant as to what he ought to do, and bewildered by the strangeness of the situation in which he found himself.

Even whilst speaking to the rector, Josephine's eyes became dim with a mixed emotion—vexation that Richard should cut such an absurd figure, and pity for him, because she knew he was suffering. Then she felt her brow become warm, for the great solemn eyes of the captain—after having rested on Richard for a moment whilst he finished his gravy with his knife, putting it into his mouth—turned and looked at Josephine, and at once dropped.

'Dick will need some taking in hand,' thought Josephine ; 'he is better at sea than on land.'

If Richard Cable had been a bumptious man, one with much self-assurance, he would have talked and joked and drunk his wine and felt quite at his ease, and gone to bed believing that he had made a good impression on the company ; but Richard was a modest man, always mistrustful of himself where he did not see his way, very sensitive, and somewhat alive to the ridiculous. He was, though he did not know it, so thoroughly a gentleman at heart, that he shrank from intruding where he was unqualified to take his place. Now, in society, into which he was cast headlong, at a dinner, of a sort with which he was quite unfamiliar, dressed differently from the other gentlemen, and knowing that he did not look well in his clothes, he was troubled and frightened, and only partly recovered himself when the ladies had left the room, and the rector took his glass and came over to the

end by Cable, as he did not attempt to come to the rector's end. The rector was a man of the world, and could get on with any one. He at once began to speak about the cruise in the yacht, and having got Richard on a familiar subject, with great forbearance encouraged Cable to talk, instead of doing all the talking himself.

When Cable spoke of anything that he understood he spoke well, straightforwardly and intelligently. The rector kept him in the dining-room a long time. He was interested in the cruise of the *Josephine*. Perhaps he saw that it was a kindness to keep his host there, conversing on what he could talk about, instead of bringing him into the drawing-room and the society of the ladies.

'Shall we rejoin the ladies ?' asked Mr Cornelius.

'No hurry, Cornelius,' answered the rector.—'What capital port this is ; I'll have another glass. Mrs Sellwood must be allowed her nap.'

When, about eleven o'clock, the guests were gone, and Mr Cornelius and Aunt Judith had retired, then, for the first time since they had landed, Josephine and Richard were alone together. She closed the piano and blew out some of the candles and turned down the lamp. Richard was standing at the chimney-piece with one hand on the marble mantel-shelf, looking at the French ormolu clock. His head was slightly bent ; he was immersed in thought, just as many a time he had stood at night resting his hand on the bulwarks of his lightship in a dream.

'What is it, Richard ?' asked Josephine, going up to him.

'I was thinking—it is half-past eleven—of the little bedroom at home where mother and all my children are now asleep, and the angels watch them.'

'Home,' said Josephine reproachfully. 'This now is your home. Is it not beautiful ?'

'This—home !' He looked round with dazed eyes. 'Home ?'

'Of course, Richard.'

'Home ?' He shook his head. 'If I was dead and gone to another world, I reckon at first I should feel a bit muddled. In time, maybe, it will come—not all at once.' And as he went up-stairs, he wondered in his heart whether he could ever come to feel there—in that grand house, among those strange people—at home.

#### THE CATTLEMAN OF THE ATLANTIC.

THE eye of the landsman sees little in the personal appearance of the seaman giving indication of the taste for cleanliness which is habitual to him. His attire is often of a composite and inharmonious character, and his tarry hands and weather-beaten face are little amenable to the beautifying influences of soap and water. But let the fastidious landsman change places with Jack for a week or so on board ship, and it will be seen which of the two has the more practical reverence for the sanctity of cleanliness. It is rarely the privilege of a passenger on an ocean-going steamer to obtain a glimpse of the sailor's domestic arrangements in the forecastle ; but if he does succeed in enjoying even a momentary inspection of that compartment—where Jack

sleeps, dresses, eats, mends—he cannot fail of being struck by its cleanliness. Very different is the forecastle of the firemen, and still more different that of the half-nautical class about to be described; and it is cleanliness for its own sake, too, for the sailor resents in the strongest manner any curious observation of his 'foc'sle' by other eyes than his own. The ship's officers never look in there, knowing and respecting Jack's objections; and the landsman on board who feels moved by a curiosity to see how the sailor lives in his privacy, had better keep away from the forecastle, unless responsibly introduced.

The mariner's partiality for cleanliness in regard to his immediate personal surroundings extends to his ship as well, and he likes to see well-cleaned decks as much as the passenger likes to walk upon them. Of course, Jack is—more often than not—under the necessity of signing articles on a cargo-ship, where the cleanliness and 'ship-shapedness' of things generally are not considerations. He has less trouble, as a consequence, but he serves under silent protest. Atlantic steamers do not carry coals, to be sure; but many of them carry cattle and sheep, a description of cargo which the sailor detests in a degree only less than that in which he detests the men who go in charge of the animals. The 'stowaway' is to Jack an unmitigated nuisance, although he will share his own rations with the hiding wretch as long as is necessary, rather than see him hungry; but the cattleman is his abomination, and that of every one on board from the captain downward. Perhaps a little information regarding this particular product of the Atlantic trade—the 'bull-pusher,' as the sailor terms him—will have some interest for the general reader.

The ocean traffic in livestock is quite a recent development of trade, and is carried on most actively during the months of summer and autumn from the Canadian and United States ports. The cattle shipped to England are of two classes—'distillery' or house-fed cattle, and those fed on grass; the one being easily distinguishable from the other by certain indications of the eye chiefly. Cattle landing in British ports from the United States are, under the Privy-council Regulations, compulsorily slaughtered on the spot; those coming from Canada are exempted from this ordinance, and are taken to the public market for sale. The shipping of cattle to a great extent is a speculative business, carried on with varying luck; and perhaps in the end the only balance of profit arising from it is that of the steamship owners. It is claimed for it that it cheapens beef and mutton to the British consumer; and so it obviously ought to do, considering the low price at which Canadian and American meat can be landed in England. But the consumer himself, when the theory is propounded for his gratification, is prone to regard it as a delusion; seeing that, as a matter of fact, it has not reduced the price of butcher-meat at home. Into the political economy of this question, however, we are not called upon to enter.

The shipping of livestock is, during the summer and autumn months—almost as long as the navigation of the St Lawrence is open—the principal

trade of Montreal. As many as ten and twelve steamers laden to their full capacity with cattle and sheep may sometimes be seen leaving that port in one week. Some steamers load three decks, the sheep being always carried in pens on the upper deck. It is a remarkable fact that large numbers of the sheep become blind during the ten or twelve days' voyage, a malady which is attributed to the condensed water supplied to them for drinking, and the heat from the engine-room and funnel. There is also more mortality among sheep than among cattle, the latter as a rule suffering little except in rough weather. An interesting fact noticeable on cattle-boats is that, from one to two days before sighting land, the poor animals, by some mysterious instinct, seem to know that the sad ocean voyage is near its close, and that green fields and fresh streams are not far away. They low almost incessantly day and night. For a day or so before landing them, the men give the cattle hardly any water, so that on being turned ashore the parched beasts may be suffering from a raging thirst, the greedy gratification of which at the troughs will swell them to respectable proportions for the eye of the market.

Point St Charles, in the outskirts of the city of Montreal, not far from the Victoria Tubular Bridge which carries the Grand Trunk Railway across the wide St Lawrence, is the great entrepot of the Canadian cattle-trade. Blinding with road-dust, coal-dust, and factory smoke, a more uncomfortable spot on a hot summer day could hardly be found in the British empire. Here are situated the cattle-yards, where the cattle are unshipped from the railway cars and collected for transfer to the steamships down at the city wharfs. And here the curious observer can behold at any time of day during the shipping season a crowd of cattlemen waiting the chance of a job. When a shipper has his consignment ready for shipment, he has at his hand at the 'yards' any number of candidates for the duty of attending to the cattle on the voyage. Some of these are emigrants sick of that side of the world, and glad to obtain the chance of working their passage back to England without other remuneration. On these terms, they have no difficulty in obtaining what they want; and this class of men are more odious to the professional cattleman than the lazy and awkward stowaway is to the sailor—for a stronger reason. The cheap competition of the greenhorn tends to lower the rate of pay, for the shipper will naturally give the preference to the man who costs him nothing—it being part of the steamship's contract to carry over and back again the men required to look after the cattle—and a batch of greenhorns with the leavening of one or two experienced hands serves the purpose as well as (generally better than) a force of all 'old hands'; for these 'old hands,' whom you may see hanging about the cattle-yards at Point St Charles, easily identifiable by patent evidences of rascality in gait, feature, language, and attire, are, to the least experienced eye, undoubted specimens of that genus of mankind significantly termed in America 'hard' characters. The 'old hands' will not work without wages; but, as has been said, the competition of cheap labour has beaten down their trade, and now

they have to be content with the average remuneration of two or three pounds for the trip, instead of three times the amount, formerly paid. This payment completes the contract on the part of the shipper; and the steamship Companies are bound to provide the men with return passages to the port from which the cattle are shipped. The cattlemen—who are engaged in the proportion of about one man to forty beasts—are accommodated on board in a separate forecastle, which successive gangs of them render unspeakably dirty. They are allowed the same food as the seamen and stokers. From the first day of going on board, the cattlemen are a public nuisance to the ship. The steward and cook are the objects of their special hostility. Those men, who never worked when ashore, have probably had a prolonged course of starvation before embarking; and the first glutinous cravings of hunger partially appeased, the food, which at first was grateful to their famished appetites, is reviled in the choicest terms of a copious and forcible vocabulary. What is good enough for the sailors is not nearly good enough for them. Their work affords them a good deal of leisure, and this they mainly devote to begging and thieving in the neighbourhood of the galley. The cattlemen are not, unfortunately, amenable to discipline, as the crew are, and they do not fail to stretch this impunity to the farthest limit. They do their work, because they must; they are supervised by a foreman, whose unfavourable report of any man to the agent at Liverpool, Glasgow, Bristol, or London, as the case may be, would have the unfailing effect of reducing or altogether confiscating the delinquent's pay. But the foreman has no interest in the men's conduct beyond the due feeding and watering of the cattle. The rest of his time, the average cattlemen, who is an 'old hand,' and familiar with all practicable rascality on board ship, devotes to the work of making himself a nuisance. It is an hour of relief to the ship's company when at last the cattle are put ashore and the cattlemen along with them; and Jack, observing the 'bulldozer's' exit from the forecastle with a thoughtful grin, amuses his fancy with the familiar picture of the despicable mendicancy which the same rowdy individual will by-and-by present when once more landed at Montreal after his trip.

Those men who have contracted for payment immediately accompany the foreman to the office of the agent to whom the cattle have been consigned. The shipper has sent by mail a letter of instructions specifying the amount payable to each man. There are some shippers who defraud the wretches of their hardly earned money by sending no authority to the agent to pay them; and the scoundrel who consigns the men to a week or ten days of starvation and open-air lodging while they are waiting the return sailing of the steamer, is constituted of no finer moral fibre than the victims of his petty knavery. The great majority of shippers, however, fulfil their contracts honourably, and as soon as the men present themselves to the agent, they are paid. Then forthwith is commenced a great 'drunk.' The cattlemen never for one moment dreams of extending his acquaintance beyond the congenial purloin of the docks

in Liverpool or of the public-houses around the cattle-market at Islington. In both places, his money is spent in one or two days. Then want succeeds with enforced and miserable sobriety. If he has not paid in advance for his bed and board—which he seldom thinks of doing—he sleeps where he can by night, and sponges on whom he can by day; and at last, on the day of sailing, presents himself once more on the steamer hungry and sullen, without so much as the luxury of a pipe of tobacco to soothe his wretchedness until he has an opportunity of begging or stealing it.

Nothing cheers the cattleman on his return trip so much as to see emigrants on board. To these simple and confiding people he immediately devotes himself with his best manners and most interesting information concerning the new country to which they are adventuring; and the easily moved good-nature of the emigrant becomes as convenient to the insinuating cattleman as his trustfulness is profitable. If the fellow could only restrain his instincts within bounds of prudence, he might live well among his friends the passengers, enjoying their society and their hospitality all the way across; but when the inevitable thieving commences, the authorities of the ship interfere, and he is driven forward to the forecastle, and prohibited from trespassing aft beyond a certain sharply marked line, which the boatswain keeps his eye upon. Thus the cattleman undoes himself; and mostly in bed, or lying about the deck in moody idleness, he whiles away his time between meals until he is once more 'dumped' ashore at Montreal as impecunious as when he started.

He has, generally speaking, not one penny when he lands, unless he has pilfered something on the voyage; but Montreal is 'freer' than London or Liverpool, and he can sleep about at night without fear of interference from the police. Then, besides, there is a peculiar and popular hostelry on the wharf known as Joe Beef's Canteen, where, for a nominal sum—or, in the case of a particularly 'hard'-looking rogue, for no sum at all—the spirited proprietor dispenses solid and liquid refreshment to the indigent. For the sum of five cents (twopence-halfpenny) a very fair 'feed' can be purchased, or a 'square drink' of any spirituous liquor measured out with free liberality. Joe Beef's Canteen, from one point of view, is worth going to Montreal to see and study. For dirt, stench, drunkenness, vileness unspeakable, human wretchedness and human rascality, it is a sight and a rendezvous not to be matched, or indeed approached, in any other town or city in the civilised world. To the police it is invaluable as a medium for the detection of criminals, and hence to some extent its *raison d'être*; to the penniless cattleman or sailor or tramp, and to every approved specimen of broken-down rogue and vagabond, it opens a refuge which is deeply appreciated and extensively used.

The winter is a long and severe one across the Atlantic, and the question will naturally arise: How does the cattleman get through it? As nearly as we can estimate, from a tolerably intimate knowledge, seventy per cent. are natural rogues and vagabonds, the other thirty of a somewhat higher social instinct. The latter will

probably obtain employment of some kind to carry them on until the next shipping season; the former will almost certainly spend the interval in prison, issuing forth refreshed in good time for the summer trade.

BLOOD-MONEY.

BY CHARLES GIBBON.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAP. I.—THE TEMPTATION.

NED ALTCARR sat late at night in the scantily furnished room of his cottage. The fire burned low, for coals were precious. A candle glimmered feebly in the gloom, and sputtered as the high wind whistled through the worn framework of the window. Signs of poverty appeared in everything, and he, with hands clasping his brow, was face to face with absolute want. A clerk out of work for two months, with a sick mother and a young sister to support. He had done his best, and now the last crust had been eaten. Even that crust had been supplied by charity. The workhouse was the next step in the downward career—the workhouse or—

He started to his feet—there was some one cautiously tapping at the window, and calling in a shrill whisper: 'Ned, Ned—open, and let me in.'

He went to the door; and a man, with the collar of a heavy overcoat drawn up over the lower part of his face, and a cap worn low over his brows, pushed his way in, closing the door quickly behind him.

'What's up, Jack? Is anybody chasing you?'

Jack was excited and out of breath; but presently he answered huskily: 'I don't know; I am not sure. But I want to stay here until to-morrow night.'

'Here! Why, man, this is the first place the police searched for you. They have learned that we are old friends, and they have set a watch upon me.'

'If they came here first, they are less likely to come again soon. Anyhow, I am too tired to go farther. You must hide me for a few hours, for old times' sake.'

'What madness tempted you to come back?'

'I doubled on the hounds, and hope they are thrown off the scent.—Give me something to drink.'

Ned pointed to a broken jug containing water, and the visitor took a thirsty draught.

'Have you nothing stronger?—anything eatable?' he queried in his hurried way; and when his friend, with a gloomy shake of the head, signified no, he added: 'Is it so bad as that, lad?—And the mother ill too.—Here, take this: you can go out and get something—get some brandy. I want a fillip and a bite, for I have not dared to venture into a house since yesterday.' He placed a handful of silver and copper on the table.

Ned hesitated, and at that moment he heard his sister calling him. Fearing that the girl might come and discover the fugitive, he hastened to his mother's bedroom.

'Mother is worse, Ned; she can scarcely breathe,' said his sister, crying.

Ned looked for an instant at the invalid, raised her in his arms so that she might cough more freely, and gently laid her down again. 'Don't leave her for an instant, Kitty; I'll be back soon.' He returned to his own room, and snatched up the money which was on the table. 'Bolt the door after me, Jack; I won't be long.'

During his absence, Jack Wolton tried to rest. He threw back his cap, opened the heavy overcoat, and lay down on the little bed in the corner. But he could not lie still. Springing up with a muttered oath, which was in truth a groan of anguish, he moved restlessly about the confined space, his hands clenched, and his lips tightly closed, whilst his bloodshot eyes glared fiercely at the shadows which the flickering candle revealed around him.

He was a tall, stalwart fellow, and had been handsome; but the face was now pale and haggard. He had been fond of athletic sports; and even when he rose to the position of assistant-manager in the great cloth manufacturing firm of Arnold & Co., Leeds, he continued to be a leading spirit amongst cricketers and football players, so that his muscular powers were unimpaired by his close confinement to a desk. He was regarded as one of Fortune's favourites: frank and sociable; steady in business, and enjoying the entire confidence of the house he served. It was understood that he was to marry a pretty girl, Lizzie Holroyd, the daughter of Arnold & Co.'s cashier; and there seemed to be every prospect of happiness and prosperity for the couple.

Suddenly, there was a change in Jack Wolton's manner and conduct, which astounded everybody. He became morose, abstracted, and forgetful to such an extent, that the firm, under the advice of an experienced physician, insisted that he should take a three months' holiday, as it was evident that he had, in his eagerness to 'get on,' overworked himself to the verge of a total breakdown.

He submitted; but instead of going abroad, as he had been advised, his time was spent at Blackpool, Harrogate, and Scarborough—flying from one place to the other without finding satisfaction, and constantly appearing in Leeds at the most unexpected times. On returning to his post, he was subdued in manner, pertinacious in his attention to duty, but the old blithe spirit was gone. Meanwhile, it became known that his engagement with Lizzie Holroyd was at an end. Why and how, could only have been explained by the lovers, and they were silent.

Towards the end of a year, Jack appeared to be regaining a degree of his former healthy good-humour. Then it was rumoured that Percy Arnold, the eldest son of the head of the firm, was about to marry the daughter of a Manchester merchant-prince. When Jack was told this, he said decisively to his informant: 'It's a lie.' But when he read a paragraph in a local newspaper referring to the forthcoming event, he walked into the private room of Mr Arnold, senior, with the paper in his hand. 'Is this true?' he asked, pointing to the paragraph.

'Of course it is,' was the answer; 'and a capital match too. Why do you ask?'

'If it is true, your son is the biggest blackguard that lives.'

Old Mr Arnold was dumb-stricken, and convinced

that the man was mad. At length he gasped: 'What do you mean, sir? How dare you!'

'Don't talk about daring to me, Mr Arnold. I am sorry for you; but for your son, I hope he and I may never meet. If we do, it will be bad for one of us. He is bound to Lizzie Holroyd.'

Jack left the place, and was not seen again by any one connected with the establishment, except Ned Altcar, who, for holding intercourse with him, was promptly dismissed—at the instigation, it was believed, of Percy Arnold. The latter was a gentleman who found little favour amongst the people connected with his father's business, and he was perfectly indifferent whether he did or not. But a thrill of horror and pity did pass through the breasts of every one when it was reported that the young man had been found dead near Kirkstall Abbey—evidently murdered. The words which Jack Wolton had spoken to the dead man's father clearly indicated the criminal, and the hue and cry was raised against him; but so far he had eluded all efforts to capture him, even when they were stimulated by a government offer of one hundred pounds reward.

When Ned went out to procure the refreshments of which the fugitive stood so much in need, he learned that Mr Arnold, senior, had added five hundred pounds to the reward already offered for the capture of his son's murderer. He was extremely nervous as he placed the things on the table; and Wolton, observing how his hands trembled, told him to follow his example and take a stiff glass of brandy-and-water.

'I'll take some in to mother, first, Jack. She's very weak, and maybe this will help her. The doctor said she ought to have a little.'

Wolton nodded, and helped himself again. Then he made an attempt to eat, but could not. He tried hard, knowing of how much importance it was to him to eat rather than to drink. But he could not swallow, and he drank again.

Ned having attended to the invalid, sat down, and he, too, found some difficulty in eating. A horrible idea had possession of him—a temptation of the evil one, which he tried to find strength to conquer by drinking. The brandy acting upon his empty stomach would have had a disastrous effect; but he was careful. Wolton was not.

'Why do you keep on shivering in that way?' said the latter.

'I am frightened,' was the dull answer.

'Frightened at what?' asked Wolton recklessly.

'Frightened at myself,' rejoined Ned gloomily, with elbows resting on his knees and chin on his knuckles, whilst he stared into the embers.

'You are frightened because I am here. Well, I am sorry to bother you. But mind, Ned, whatever happens to me, what I have done was a just act of retribution.'

'No doubt, no doubt it was so in your eyes. But—'

'Oh, stop your "buts." You know, if no one else does, how much I had to bear when the girl, who was on the point of becoming my wife, told me that she liked *him* better than me. You know how hard it was for me to say: "Very well, Lizzie; if you believe that you will be happier

with Percy Arnold than with me, I shall not stand in your way." But I did it. I spoke no word of the bitterness I felt at the notion that if my fortune had been equal to his, she would not have changed. I tried to think only of what was best for her—or, at anyrate, of what pleased her best, for I never believed that he would be true to her.'

'You did the right thing by her, Jack. Nobody will gainsay that, and she was a fool not to see—'

'Drop that, Ned. I can't bear a word against her. She has found out her mistake, and is suffering for it. If he had been faithful to her, I would have got over my loss in time. But when I learned that he had left her with her baby, and was going to marry another woman, my head went wrong. I believed that they had been married—they both said so, and she believed it—poor lass.'

'He was always equal to any lie that served his purpose,' muttered Ned abstractedly, for he was tortured by that horrible idea which was flickering like a fiery speck in his brain, and unable to follow the passionate self-defence of his companion.

'Even then I held myself in. I sent for him, and told him that he must do the right thing by the girl. He laughed at me, and said she knew what she was about, and that he would see to the kid.—Think of that, Ned—think of that! I struck him, and he fell. I did not mean to kill him; but he deserved it. Such a demon had no right to live further. And yet the law would hang me for ridding the earth of such a pest.'

'Hush! Don't talk so loud. I tell you the place is watched, and you may be heard.'

'All right, old fellow. I don't want to bring you into trouble; but I do want you to understand that my act was that of an honest man.—Ah, Ned, I cared more for that girl than for—well, for my own soul. That's true.' He rose, and again moved restlessly about the room.

Ned did not look at him or speak, but was conscious of his every movement.

Presently, Wolton flung himself on the bed. 'I'll try to get a nap,' he said hoarsely, 'and that will help me on my next journey. I'll get off safe enough. Turn me out, if you are afraid to let me rest here.'

'Rubbish.—Take a rest if you can get it. I'll keep watch, and waken you, should there be any signs of danger.'

'That's like you, Ned. Thank you. I think there is a chance of sleep to-night.' His eyes closed drowsily, and presently his heavy breathing indicated that he was asleep; but his nervous movements and occasional mutterings proved that the sleep was much disturbed.

Ned glanced now and again at the recumbent form, and then back to the smouldering fire, in which he saw the big words, 'SIX HUNDRED POUNDS!'

There was a sudden hush of the wind, which had been blowing in sharp gusts, making eerie noises through the crannies of the cottage and in the chimney. The stillness was broken only by the stertorous breathing of the fugitive, who, after days and nights of restless wandering, had at length found a haven in which he might resign himself to repose in the confidence that a friend was keeping watch over him.

Ned remained in his position, his eyes hungrily watching those potent words, whilst he shuddered at the suggestion they conveyed. The lull outside startled him, and his fingers twitched convulsively. He wished the wind would rise again, and help to drown the sounds which would not allow him for a moment to forget the presence of his friend. He dug his knuckles into his temples and tried to think of other things—tried to work out a plan by which Wolton might be enabled to escape—tried to look his own future in the face and to guess what the end was to be. But that was plain enough, was his bitter thought—the workhouse or starvation, or—the other thing. Yet, six hundred pounds were written in letters of fire on the white ashes in the grate. He shut his eyes, and still he saw them as if they were burning on his eyelids. He altered his position, and they took shape out of the shadows which the feeble candle cast around him. Then voices seemed to hum the words in his ears: 'Mother ill; you, a beggar, and six hundred pounds at your command! Six hundred pounds!—one from government; five from old Arnold.'

With such a sum, what might not a man do? There was comfort assured for the mother, relief for his starving sister, and a fortune in the future for them all. And to secure this what had he to do? Only to say: 'There is your man.' He shivered again, and felt sick. In wild horror, he seized the brandy bottle, and sought to deaden the torment of thought and speculation. Yes, he had only to speak these few words, and the misery of poverty would disappear. But what besides? He would be a traitor to his friend, who had trusted his life to him! At the same time, what could life be worth to a murderer? He could know no happiness in it. The memory of his victim must haunt and torture him till he committed suicide or gave himself up to the authorities. That was supposing he escaped; and what likelihood was there of that? Would there not be countless eyes eagerly on the lookout for the wretched man, whose capture meant six hundred pounds to the lucky one who was able to say: 'There is your man.'

The moral sense of the poor clerk was being rapidly poisoned. There could be no wrong in it. Was it not a duty to aid the ends of justice? Was it not a crime to help a murderer to escape the penalty of his crime? Why should others have the reward, which he might obtain and use with advantage for innocent sufferers? It would save the man a few days, maybe a few weeks of agony; for he could experience nothing but agony whilst he was being hunted from place to place like a beast of prey, weighed down to the earth by the sense of his guilt. He could not escape. Why, then, should Ned Altcar lose the opportunity which had been thrust upon him—ay, thrust upon him, he must remember that—of finding a way out of direst misery? And yet the thought was a horrible one. They were friends, and Jack, counting upon their friendship, had sought his protection in this hour of sore need. Jack had helped him at a pinch, and if things had gone right, would have insured his rapid promotion in the house of Arnold & Co. Ned felt his head throbbing as if the blood were surging through the brain with such violence that

it must burst some of the blood-vessels. His throat was parched, and he took more brandy.

Yes, he would do it! The words appeared to be spoken loudly in his ear by some invisible being, and yet the voice was like his own. He started to his feet, desperately resolved to escape the temptation which was overpowering him, by rousing the sleeper. 'Jack, Jack! Rouse up, lad, and go—there is danger here!' he said hoarsely.

'It's no use—no use,' muttered the fugitive, disturbed in his sleep, but not roused from it. 'That face haunts me everywhere, and it will not let me rest. There is no escape. I am weary of the struggle. Let them come and end it all quickly. I am worn out. Death is a welcome friend.—Poor Lizzie!'

Ned stood spellbound and awe-stricken. He had been right, then: the man was enduring mental torments which would render death welcome, notwithstanding his defiant justification of his deed. Was not this a plain intimation to Ned Altcar that the thing which had appeared to him as a prompting of the foul fiend would be a service to his friend? Muddled as his senses were, he made another effort to resist the sophistry which was seeking to reconcile his conscience to treachery.

'Rouse, Jack, rouse!—there is danger!' he cried hastily, afraid to delay, lest resolution should fail him.

He grasped Wolton by the shoulder; and at his touch, the man sprang up fiercely, prepared to grapple with a foe. Half awake, he did not recognise his friend, and seized him by the throat; but coming to himself, he exclaimed: 'Hello, Ned, lad, what's up? I have been dreaming, and thought a constable had grabbed me.—What ails you, that you keep on shivering?'

'You have had a rest. I want you to slip out by the back of the cottage. You are not safe here.'

'Has anything happened? Have you heard anybody about?'

'No; but you are not safe here,' was the evasive but truthful reply. 'When I went out to get the things, I learned that old Arnold has added five hundred to the reward offered by the authorities for your apprehension.'

'That will make six hundred. Didn't think I was worth so much. Well, he'll be a lucky chap who gets it. But if there are no signs of immediate danger, I'll lie down again. Heaven only knows when there will be another chance for a sleep.'

'I wish you would go. The detectives may come at any minute. I tell you again that you are not safe here.' Ned spoke earnestly, almost pleadingly; for he was trying to save himself from himself. His necessities were so great, that he knew it would not be possible to resist much longer the temptation which was thrust upon him.

'Safer here than anywhere else, Ned, so long as you keep watch,' answered Wolton, stretching himself on the bed again. 'Let me remain for this night in peace. To-morrow night—ah, well, we had better not think of that.'

Ned was irritated by this stupid rejection of his warnings; and still more irritated when he perceived that Wolton was asleep again. He, Ned Altcar, who had committed no crime, could not

sleep ; and yet here was this man, with blood upon his soul, sleeping soundly !

The candle started into a broad flame as the paper which was wrapped around the base, to make it fit the candlestick, caught fire ; then it went out. This time, Wolton did not breathe heavily ; he slept as peacefully as a child, as if no sorrow, no regret, no crime lay upon his conscience. The darkness and the silence were terrible to Ned Altcar. He had done his best to warn his friend of the danger which beset him. He had done his duty as a friend ; now, he must do his duty as a citizen of a law-abiding country, and as a man who had to find food at anyrate, and comfort if possible, for those dependent on him.

He went forth stealthily, opening and closing the door with the least possible noise. He proceeded to the police station, and had a brief interview with the superintendent on duty.

'There is a reward of six hundred pounds offered to any one who will give such information as will lead to the apprehension of the man who murdered Mr Percy Arnold ?'

'Yes,' answered the superintendent, eyeing the speaker with an expression of curiosity and doubt. 'Have you got any information ?'

'I can show you where to find the man.'

Every nerve in Altcar's body quivered as he spoke the fatal words ; but he appeared to be calm. He was insensible to pain of mind or body. Sullen resolution to do this thing sustained him. Six hundred pounds ! There would be no more starving, when he possessed that fortune.

After some sharp questioning, the superintendent summoned two constables, who proceeded with Altcar to his cottage. He told them to go in, directed them to the room where they would find the man who was wanted ; but he remained outside, in the bleak light of the first flush of dawn on a cold misty morning.

#### SOME CURIOUS WAGERS.

So far as we can go back in the world's history, we find the rage for making wagers prevalent. The Romans had a great taste for wagers and bets ; and they had a conventional form of ratifying these contracts, which consisted in taking from the finger the ring which the higher classes invariably wore, and giving it into the keeping of some third party or umpire. One of the wildest bets ever made was that of a physician of the ancient world named Asclepiades. He wagered against Fortune that he would never be ill during his life, under penalty of losing the reputation he had acquired of being the most famous physician of his time. Absurd and impious as was this presumption, he won his wager, although he could not enjoy it, for, at a very advanced period of life, he died from the effects of a fall down-stairs.

The Romans were forbidden by the *lex Titia* and the *lex Cornelia* to bet upon the success of any unlawful game, or indeed of any games whatever, unless they were trials of courage, bodily strength, or skill. In the later days of Rome, her citizens were prohibited from making wagers upon the death or exaltation of the popes and on

the promotion of cardinals. At Venice, no wager might be laid upon the election of persons to fill the public offices ; at Genoa, on the revolution of states or kingdoms, the success of military expeditions, the arrival and departure of vessels, or proposed marriages. Somewhat similar to this last was an Act of Parliament passed in Paris in 1565 which rendered it illegal to make a woman the subject of a wager.

The parliament of Dôle, in France, was called upon to decide a very curious wager in the year 1634. It was between two citizens of Pasmes, one of whom had agreed, on consideration of his being paid the sum of twenty-four francs, to furnish the other with a quantity of grains of millet, in proportion to the number of children that should be born within a certain extent of country during one year. He was to hand over one grain for the first child, two for the second, four for the third, and so on, always doubling the number of grains for each successive birth. The number of children born within the specified time was sixty-six ; and such an enormous quantity of grains of millet had to be supplied to meet the conditions of the agreement, that the contracting party demanded the cancelling of the bet, on the ground that it was founded upon an impossible condition. The court agreed at once that it was impossible for the contract to be carried out ; and decided that the person who had received the twenty-four francs should repay them to his opponent, and should give him an additional sum of twenty-four francs. Surely this was anything but a just judgment, for it was impossible that the gainer could have lost. He had made his calculations, and was betting upon the ignorance of the loser. It was therefore a wager based upon bad faith, and should have been annulled altogether.

A wager was made early in the last century by a banker named Bulliot. He was a firm believer in the superstition that if rain falls on St Swithin's day (July 15), it will also fall, more or less, for forty days after. St Swithin's day in the year 1725 was very wet ; and so Bulliot offered to bet any one who chose to put down his money, that the next forty days would be rainy. So many persons showed a desire to take up this wager, that its terms were reduced to writing as follows : 'If, dating from St Swithin's day, it rains more or little during forty days *successively*, Bulliot will be considered to have gained ; but if it ceases to rain for only one day during that time, Bulliot has lost.' On these terms, Bulliot betted against all who presented themselves. He was so confident of success that he placed money against articles of value of every description. People brought gold-headed canes, snuff-boxes, jewels, even clothes ; and Bulliot wagered as much money against them as he considered they were worth. When his stock of cash came to an end, he issued notes and bills of exchange to such an extent that it was said he had paper money out to the amount of a hundred thousand crowns. All this naturally excited a great deal of public curiosity, and the rash man found himself quite fashionable for the time being. Verses were made in his honour, a play was produced which had him for its hero, in a word he attracted as much attention as if he had been a monarch or a famous statesman. But,

unfortunately for Bulliot, St Swithin was not true to his character. For the first twenty-one days of the stipulated time, more or less rain fell. The twenty-second day, however, was bright and cloudless, and night came on without there being the slightest sign of rain. Bulliot was ruined, and ruined so completely that he was unable to meet the notes and bills that bore his name. The holders of these tried to enforce payment; but the ancient law did not recognise debts of this kind, any more than does the law of more modern days. They were accordingly non-suited, and their debts declared irrecoverable.

In the early part of the present century, sporting-men were fond of betting on the duration of the lives of celebrities. Napoleon I. was specially the subject of these wagers. It is related that at a dinner party in 1809, Sir Mark Sykes offered to pay any one who would give him a hundred guineas down, a guinea a day so long as Napoleon lived. The offer was taken by a clergyman present; and for three years Sir Mark paid him three hundred and sixty-five guineas per annum. He then thought that he had thrown away enough money, and disputed further payment. The recipient, who was not at all disposed to lose his comfortable annuity, brought an action, which, after lengthy litigation, was decided in favour of the baronet.

A foreign Prince staying in Paris made a heavy bet with a member of the Imperial Club that he—the Prince—would, in the course of the next two hours, be arrested by the police without committing any offence or provoking the authorities in any fashion. The way he won his wager was by dressing himself in a tattered old blouse, a pair of mouldy boots full of holes, and a disreputable burlesque of a hat. Thus attired, he walked up to one of the most aristocratic cafés in Paris, and, seating himself at a table, called for a cup of chocolate. The waiter, as was only natural, did not care about serving so suspicious-looking a customer before he was assured that payment would be forthcoming, so he told the Prince that he must pay in advance. Upon this, His Highness pulled a bundle of bank-notes out of his pocket, and picking out one of considerable value, told him to take the price of the coffee out of it and bring back the change. The man immediately went in search of the proprietor of the café, who, when he heard the facts of the case, ordered the coffee to be served, and at the same time sent to the nearest police station for a *sergent de ville*. The Prince was of course arrested, and taken before a commissary of police. He announced his rank, and told his reasons for assuming such an unprincely costume. The authorities were obdurate at first; but finally, they consented to send the Prince under escort to the Imperial Club, where the gentleman with whom the bet had been made proved his identity, and paid His Highness the money he had fairly won.

Vieuxtemps, the well-known violinist, used to tell a strange story of a wager which he averred he had really witnessed whilst on a visit to London. It was to the effect that one day as he was walking across London Bridge, a poor wretch jumped up on to the parapet and leapt down into the river. There was at once a rush of eager spectators, and a voice shouted: 'I'll bet he

drowns!'—'Two to one, he'll swim ashore!'—'Done!' Meanwhile, Vieuxtemps had hastened to get a boat, and was rowing with a waterman to the rescue of the unhappy creature, who was floundering about, and just managing to keep himself afloat. As they reached him, and were preparing to pull him into the boat, there was a roar from the bridge: 'Leave him alone—there is a bet on!' The waterman immediately lay on his oars, refusing to make any further attempt to save the drowning man; and Vieuxtemps saw him sink before his very eyes.

A wager was made in 1806 in the Castle-yard, York, between Thomas Hodgson and Samuel Whitehead as to which should succeed in assuming the most singular character. Umpires were selected, whose duty it was to decide upon the comparative absurdity of the costumes in which the two men appeared. On the appointed day, Hodgson came before the umpires decorated with bank notes of various value on his coat and waistcoat, a row of five-guinea notes and a long netted purse of gold round his hat, whilst a piece of paper bearing the words 'John Bull' was attached to his back. Whitehead was dressed like a woman on one side, one half of his face was painted, and he wore a silk stocking and slipper on one leg. The other half of his face was blacked, to resemble that of a negro; on the corresponding side of his body he wore a gaudy, long-tailed, linen coat; and his leg was cased in half a pair of leather breeches with a boot and spur. One would fancy that Whitehead must have presented by far the more singular appearance. The umpires thought differently, however, and awarded the stakes to Hodgson.

A somewhat similar bet was one made in relation to the Master of the Revels to George II., named Heidegger, whose ugliness it was declared impossible to surpass. One of the courtiers wagered that he would produce some one who should be pronounced uglier than Heidegger. He was allowed a few days in which to unearth his champion, and it is said that he employed them in personally ransacking the worst slums of London. Somewhere in St Giles' he found an old woman whom he thought sufficiently plain to confront with Heidegger. When the two were put face to face, the judges said that it was impossible to decide which of them was entitled to bear the proud title of 'ugliest being in London.' A courtier, however, suggested that Heidegger should put on the old woman's bonnet. This he did; and the additional ugliness it gave him was such that he was unanimously declared the winner.

A notorious gambler of the last century finally ruined himself by a very extraordinary bet. He had been playing with Lord Lorn; their stakes had been very high, and luck had gone steadily against him. Exasperated at his losses, he jumped up from the card-table, and seizing a large punch-bowl, said: 'For once I'll have a bet where I have an equal chance of winning! Odd or even, for fifteen thousand guineas?' 'Odd,' replied the peer calmly. The bowl was dashed against the wall, and on the pieces being counted, there proved to be an odd one. The rash gambler paid up his fifteen thousand guineas; but, if tradition be correct, it was only by selling the last of his estates that he was enabled to do so.

Some years ago, a gentleman made a heavy bet that he would stand for a day on London Bridge with a tray full of sovereigns fresh from the Mint, which he would be unable to dispose of at a penny apiece. A nursemaid bought one to quiet a crying child; but no more were disposed of.

### REMINISCENCES OF AN OLD PHYSICIAN.

THEY call me 'the old doctor.' Of course, my long white beard and the scant thatch on my head bear witness to the veracity of the term; and I have but to look at my stalwart grandsons to be fully assured that the adjective applies to me; nevertheless, I fancy that a spic of irony is implied in it. The go-ahead men of the present generation consider me out of date entirely—my ideas antiquated and obsolete. Well, I should not wonder if they are; for I suppose no branch of science has made such rapid and wonderful strides as that connected with the profession to which I have the honour to belong. No doubt, I am of the old school. I am resting on my oars now. The strife and struggle of life are over for me; and as I sit at my ease in my old armchair, memory takes me back to the past. I think of my student days, and I see before me those grand men whose footsteps first beat into the track which has led to the present heights of research and of discovery. Abernethy was one of those splendid pioneers. I think I see him as he used to lecture at St Bartholomew's: small of stature, nose *retrossé*, eyes small, dark, and restless, gleaming alternately with wit and humour, or lit up with ineffable tenderness. A face comical and satirical, if you will, but full of expression; and crowned with a raised tuft of well-powdered hair, ending in a long queue. His was among the last of the pigtails. Then, to add to the quaintness of his *tout ensemble*, he had a knack of thrusting one hand into his breeches-pocket while he gesticulated with the other. No lecturer in London could rivet the attention of his pupils as he did, so lucid were his descriptions, so powerful his language, so dramatic his action. Abernethy was far from being the coarse man that some of the clumsy imitators of his naive brusqueries would lead one to imagine. True, he would launch his little winged darts of satire ruthlessly at the manifold affectations of self-indulgent invalids: he had small sympathy for such; and no regard for rank or wealth of themselves. But when his feelings were enlisted, when called on to witness real suffering, real distress, who so kind as he? And then, when poverty was superadded, the recording angel alone might tell of his benevolences.

Although a great admirer of Abernethy, the hero of my boyish worship was Sir Astley Cooper. The lives of these two great luminaries for long years ran parallel. With Sir Astley I came more into personal contact; and assuredly he was the first surgeon of his day and generation. He was President of the College of Surgeons when I went up for my examination for membership. I had just gone through the fiery ordeal, and was drawing my breath triumphantly, when Sir Astley, using his privilege as President, called my attention: 'Describe to me, sir, the origin and distribution of the fifth pair of nerves.' I quailed for

an instant, taking in, as one does at such moments, the whole beauty of his magnificent physique; then gathering up my somewhat scattered senses, I answered slowly, deliberately, and I trust also clearly, for I heard him say 'Capital!' No word of praise either before or since could have the electric effect of that trisyllable. It was positively intoxicating. My fortune seemed to be made from that moment.

There was a wonderful fascination about that man. We students treasured every little anecdote connected with him. One I especially remember. Sir Astley had a pupil boarding with him, a young man belonging to a wealthy and very honourable family. He was treated as a son, and shared the surgeon's confidence. He was somewhat extravagant; but as his allowance was ample, this fact scarcely attracted attention. One day, however, Sir Astley was startled to find, on examining his banking book, that a large sum had been drawn out, for which he could in no way account. He went straight to the banker for an explanation. 'There must be some mistake,' said the surgeon; 'I have certainly never drawn so large a sum.'

'It was drawn out on such a date,' returned the banker; 'and here is your cheque, duly signed.'

Sir Astley examined the cheque. He was a man of quick perception; he knew it to be a forgery; but not a muscle of his face betrayed that fact. 'Oh, indeed. Ah, yes; I see. You are quite right; the fact had escaped me. Yes—yes; you are right.' Sir Astley left the bank.

Not a single word was spoken during the whole of that day; he would do nothing hastily; he required time for thought.

The next morning, the young man was summoned into the library. The door was closed. Calmly, but stoutly, Sir Astley charged him with the forgery. It simply meant hanging in those days. Imagine, if you can, the blanched cheek, the stammering words of the unhappy culprit. He threw himself at his master's feet and cried piteously for mercy. His whole life had been wrong—one tissue of wrong-doing. Step after step he had sunk in the slough, and now, ruin, utter, irrevocable ruin was the result. He never attempted to exculpate himself; too well he knew that nothing but a full and open confession could avail with a man of such lucid discernment, such scrupulous honour, and high integrity as Sir Astley.

'Sir,' said the baronet, 'for the sake of your excellent parents—and for your own—I will consider the matter. You will meet me here tomorrow morning at this hour.'

Those twenty-four hours must have been agony for both master and pupil. The morrow came.

'Sir,' said Sir Astley sternly, 'I pity your case. Your talents, your position, and the kindness of your nature, all augured better things. Your utter weakness has been your ruin. You have disgraced yourself. You have sunk to the level of a felon. It would be death to my honoured friends, your parents, if they were to have the smallest suspicion of this. I have determined to give you one chance. I have been able to obtain for you the post of surgeon to one of His Majesty's colonies. That will be sufficient for your maintenance. If you prove yourself faithful to your duties and to your promises of amendment,

an opportunity will be afforded you of obtaining a private practice. You may do well. One condition I exact from you—you will not return without my consent, or you know the consequences. I will vouch for your ability, your thorough efficiency. Only be true to yourself and to your word, and you may retrieve your lost honour. You may with time prove yourself an honest man.—Now, go. You must sail within this week. Tell your father I am sorry that the leave-taking must be so brief; but it is a good post, and I desire that you should fill it.' This was a long speech for a man of few words, as Sir Astley was, and his voice—firm at first—almost broke down.

As for the delinquent, he only answered by tears, truly tears of repentance.

The youth's father, unconscious of the magnanimity of Sir Astley's conduct, was grateful to his friend for forwarding his boy's prospects.

'May I be allowed the honour, the happiness, of writing to you, sir, from time to time?' was the poor misguided lad's request as he bade his generous patron farewell before he sailed.

The permission was granted.

It is pleasant to record the fact that Sir Astley Cooper never had occasion to repent his noble conduct. The young fellow succeeded beyond all expectation. He was an ornament to his profession. His gratitude showed itself in every act of his life. Gratifying it to be enabled to add that he paid back the purloined money with full interest; and when he returned to his native land with a well-earned fortune, his name was unsullied, the secret had been so generously, so tenderly kept.

I said that Sir Astley Cooper possessed wonderful discernment. An instance of it occurred whilst I was studying. A gentleman of high position had been foully murdered. The excitement thereby created was immense. Sir Astley Cooper was called in to examine the body. Before leaving the house, the surgeon said to a friend: 'Patch committed the murder.'

Patch was a servant. He had been giving evidence; and had shown himself assiduous, officious, and affectionately concerned. It was a bold speech, unhesitatingly uttered: 'Patch committed the murder. I would stake my life Patch did it.'

Patch was thereupon arrested. The matter was clearly gone into. Patch was hanged on the most undoubted evidence.

#### GIANT EARTHWORMS.

In any group of animals, there are always a number of huge forms at one end of the series, which gradually dwindle down to the tiniest creatures at the other extreme. In that group of animals to which we ourselves belong, we have the titanic whales on the one hand, and the minute shrews and fieldmice on the other. Consciously or unconsciously, we make use of the human body as a standard of size in all animals familiar to us; perhaps also in smaller creatures we adopt the mean as a standard, and speak of all those that exceed in size this selected standard as being large. A group of animals that is perhaps not very well known to the readers of this *Journal* exemplifies what has just

been said in a very striking fashion. Any person would at once say that an earthworm is a small creature, never exceeding a few inches in length; but as a matter of fact, there exist in many parts of the world colossal earthworms which are four, five, or even six feet in length. Some few years ago, a description came to this country of a mysterious creature which lived below the ground, and, as it burrowed its way through the earth, felled all the trees that stood in its path. This fabulous monster was reported from Brazil, where it has even received a name; the natives call it the *minhocao*, and it was believed from all accounts to be actually a representative of our British earthworm. But for the present the *minhocao* must be looked upon as a kind of terrestrial sea-serpent.

But just as the highly coloured descriptions of the sea-serpent rest upon a certain substratum of truth, in the shape of large seals, or even cuttle-fishes, so the existence of huge earthworms of six feet in length renders the fable of the *minhocao* more intelligible. These animals are mainly found in the tropics, where heat and abundant rainfall are conducive to their existence. In many parts of Natal, these huge earthworms are very abundant after heavy rains; and they have been stated by competent observers to appear on such occasions by hundreds, literally covering the ground. The huge bulk of the creatures is, however, too much for their feebly developed muscles, and they are often unable to reach their underground burrows again before the sun comes out and dries them up.

Large size is, except in some special cases, invariably a disadvantage, and leads to extinction. Among many orders of animals, the extinct forms, which are of course known to us by their fossil remains, are of huge size as compared with their living representatives; the remains of gigantic reptiles have been discovered which show that the animals when alive must have measured some sixty or seventy feet in length; and now we have only the comparatively small crocodiles and lizards. Instances of this kind might be multiplied indefinitely, but they all point to the conclusion that small size is, other things being equal, a direct advantage, and that, when a race of animals increases unduly in bulk, it is doomed to disappear. This may well be the case with the gigantic earthworms; they are not so abundant as are the smaller kinds, and they are not found so universally. We must look upon them, therefore, as a survival from a past age, that are gradually disappearing, and giving place to the smaller kinds, which are more active, and can, therefore, more readily escape their foes.

It is an interesting subject for speculation to try and imagine how earthworms first came to exist, because there seems to be a direct connection between the abundance of these creatures and the advance of civilisation in the way of agriculture. Anglers know well that they cannot get worms for bait except in cultivated ground; and where did the worms hide themselves when there was 'not a man to till the ground'? Whether they existed in the ages before the creation of man or not, cannot be said; but it is at anyrate certain that agriculture is responsible for their immense numbers,

and perhaps also for the very great diversity of species. It may be a fact new to some readers that there are an immense number of different kinds of earthworms, which have been divided by naturalists into several families; and these differ from each other quite as much as (or even more than) do the different kinds of birds or reptiles; we find, for example, that the earthworms of India or New Zealand are entirely different in their structure from the species which are familiar to us here at home. And these differences are often marked in external characters. In Ceylon, there is a large kind which is of a bright blue colour, and almost every variety in tint is exhibited by the different species. Some earthworms are phosphorescent like the glowworm and the firefly (it is hardly necessary, perhaps, to say that these two last-mentioned creatures are insects, not worms in the true meaning of the word), and many other creatures, chiefly insects, which are nocturnal in their habits. In the island of Sumatra, there is a remarkable species of earthworm which is well known to the natives from the fact that it makes a sharp sound during the night. It is not understood how this sound is produced, but it is probably due to the minute bristles which are implanted in the body—and which can be readily felt by rubbing an earthworm between the fingers from tail to head—grating against the small stones as the animal moves along.

The last work which Mr Darwin published was on the subject of Earthworms (see *Chambers's Journal*, No. 936), and he showed how important was the agency of these creatures in levelling the soil. As a worm passes through the ground, it swallows the earth in front of it. On coming to the surface, this earth is voided in the form of little castings, which are so conspicuous on a lawn after rain. These castings are dried by the sun and blown about by the wind, and thus tend to level the ground and to bury objects lying upon its surface. If some of the colossal worms were to devote their energies to this kind of work, and were as abundant as the smaller species, they could almost bury cities and drain rivers.

#### EXORCISING A GHOST.

There is, in one of the midland counties, a fine old and rather celebrated historical mansion, with towers, turrets, and mulioned windows. But alas! for all its attractive beauty; it possessed that one terrible drawback with which so many of our grand old mansions are unluckily afflicted—it had its ghost and its haunted room, which no servant would enter alone, even in broad daylight, and in which no one ever—or very rarely—slept. With the usual provoking irregularity which belongs to the whole tribe of disembodied spirits, the ghost was known to 'walk' at the most inconvenient moments, always appearing when not wanted, and carefully disappointing every party of valiant ghost-hunters whenever they mustered up courage enough for the watch. This ghost always appeared in the attire of a medieval monk—brown habit and cowl, rope-girdle, sandals, and carried a parchment roll in one hand.

About two years ago it happened that the

mansion was full of visitors, and amongst the last to arrive was a very well-known canon of the Church, celebrated for his unflagging spirits and sparkling wit. But every room was occupied. He was far too great a favourite to be refused. What was to be done? Happy thought—the haunted chamber! The canon, as a good priest, would, of course, have no fear of ghosts; and besides, he would know nothing of the ghost, as this was his first visit. In this, however, the good host was mistaken, for the witty canon had often heard the story and knew all about it. Accordingly, he was committed to the haunted chamber.

Next morning at breakfast, no one appeared with a brighter or happier face, or seemed fuller of high spirits and exuberant fun. 'It is quite clear,' thought the host, greatly relieved, 'he has not been disturbed in any way.'

Next morning, and the next, and the next, he still came down amongst the early ones with the same light-hearted aspect, which only those who have enjoyed sound sleep or peaceful dreams can wear. The host's anxiety at length could stand it no longer, and he congratulated his visitor on the soundness of his rest and quietude of his nights. But the witty canon, seeing his opportunity, suddenly assuming a very grave face, informed his host that his first night at anyrate had been neither quiet nor undisturbed! A sudden pause and a dead silence followed, as the canon proceeded to describe how, whilst he was lying wide awake, he was aware of the presence in the room of a tall dark figure, which came up to the bed. He observed that the figure was habited as a monk, and carried a parchment roll, with which it appeared to point. The canon ended by dwelling on its ghastly colour and its glaring, horrible eyes, as they shone forth beneath the dark cowl.

A dozen anxious questions at once poured in upon the speaker: 'What did you do?' 'Did you address it?' 'Did he speak to you?' 'How did you get rid of him?'

'How?' replied the witty canon. 'Why, very easily. I asked him to subscribe to my schools and school-treat, when he vanished immediately; and I need hardly add he has never honoured me with another visit.'

#### IN ARRAN.

THE scent of heather from the purple hills  
Blends with the sweet, strong breathings of the sea.

The lark in heaven, the plover on the lea,

Stray into silence, as the star that stills

All labour, with her silvern lamp fulfils

Her kindly task, and men from toil are free.

Now gorgeous clouds like Tyrian tapestry

Engird the sun, whose light upon them thrills

Richer and fairer as he leaves their halls,

Till all the glory vanishes; and lo!

Swathed in a cloud, the little moon, new-born,

Steals timidly around the starry walls,

Until the first cool herald breeze shall blow

Upon the golden eyelids of the morn.

J. T. LEVENS.

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